



Winter 2016





Minneapolis and St. Paul each had a complex intersection on the edge of downtown dubbed 7 Corners, and streetcar lines funneled through both of them. This is St. Paul's. The illustration is from a 1949 Twin Cities traffic study, and was intended to show the evil of traffic congestion. Read more on page 11.

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The Minnesota Streetcar Museum operates the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line in Minneapolis and the Excelsior Streetcar Line in Excelsior. Its mission is to preserve Minnesota's electric railway heritage.

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Corrections & new info

On page 6 of the Fall 2015 issue, the 3rd Avenue stop was incorrectly called 3rd Street.

In the photo of the last Hopkins streetcar on page 15 Corbin Kidder (second from left) was incorrectly identified as Gene Corbey.

Although the Hopkins line was abandoned on August 4, 1951, the Hopkins viaduct remained standing until September 1952.

Car 265's centennial

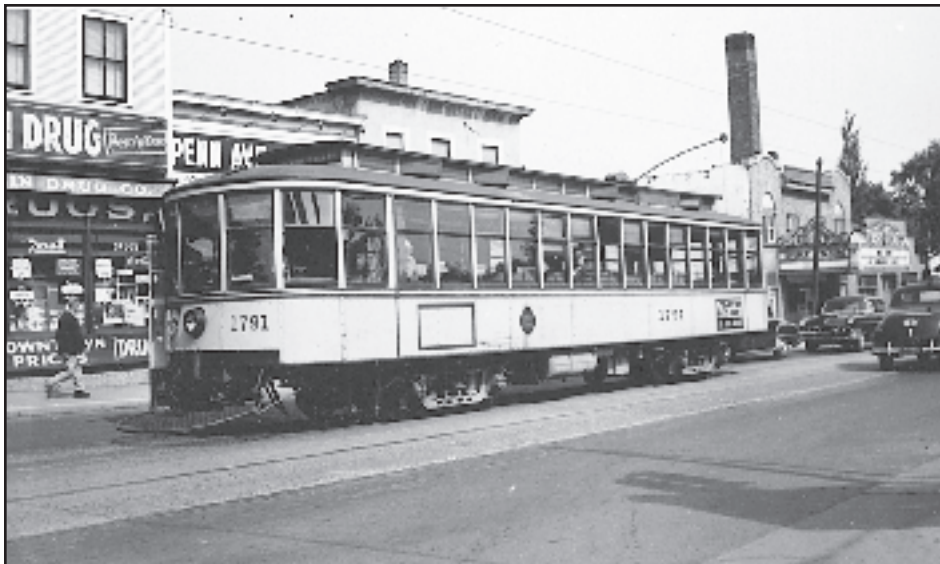
In late 1915 TCRT's Snelling Shops completed streetcar #1791, part of the L-8 class, the last and largest group of home-built standard cars. That year had seen the opening of the St. Clair Avenue line and the extension of the East 4th Street line in St. Paul. In a few months the Glenwood Avenue and Randolph Avenue lines would both be extended. The streetcar system was growing and TCRT needed more cars.

Meanwhile in Duluth, the Morgan Park extension was opening and Duluth Street Railway also found itself short of equipment. In May 1916 TCRT sold DSR cars 1789-1792. After less than a year in the Twin Cities, car 1791 became DSR #265.

There were 428 members of the L-8 class. Constructed from 1912 to 1917, they were the last group of heavy wood-bodied cars on steel underframes. By the time the last ones entered service they were already obsolete. The industry was moving into steel cars and lightweights. Duluth bought 40 of the L-8's, and four went to the Minneapolis, Anoka & Cuyuna Range.



Happy 100th birthday to Car 265. This issue recounts the story of our big Duluth streetcar, which has served our museum ten years longer than it ran in actual transit service. The top photo shows the car at 13th Avenue E. and Superior Street as built, with triple stream rear gates. The lower photo from the 1930s shows it at the Woodland loop, rebuilt for 1-man operation.



Top: 265 was built as TCRT 1791. When it was sold to Duluth, a second 1791 was built and here it is on Penn Avenue at Lowry. The other photos show how Duluth rebuilt the cars for 1-man operation. Car 266 was identical and accompanied 265 to Duluth.



Like all the TCRT standard cars, they were designed for a two-man crew. The motorman was walled off on the front platform. All passengers entered and exited through the rear platform, with its wire gates. This jammed up the aisle and slowed the operation. It didn't help that the conductor had to work his way up and down the aisle collecting fares.

Following the lead of other cities, TCRT and DSR went to Pay As You Enter fare collection. Passengers filed past a farebox inside the rear door, dropped their fares in, then sat down. Single stream front exit doors were installed, creating a one-way flow of passengers through the car, from rear

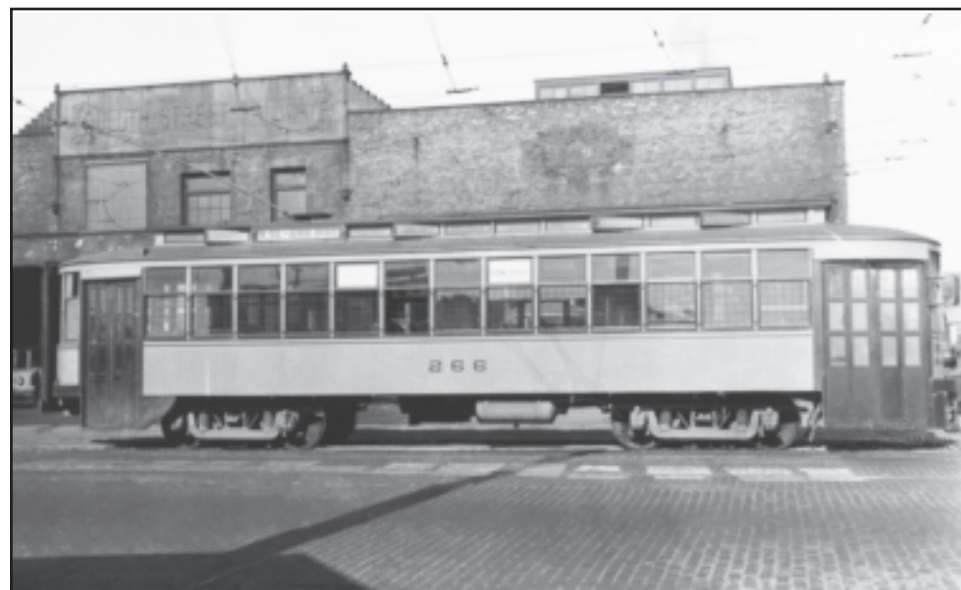
to front. From 1921 to 1923, TCRT mostly picked the L-8s, its newest cars, to receive the front exit doors. DSR did the same to its ten newest L-8s.

Conversion to 1-man

By the mid-1920s, ridership was declining due to automobile competition. Both TCRT and DSR began experimenting with 1-man operation, first eliminating the conductor on the most lightly patronized lines. Both purchased a few lightweight cars for these duties, but in the end they rebuilt the heavyweight standard cars to operate with only a motorman.

Doing so meant reversing the flow of passengers through the car. Instead of entering at the rear and exiting at the front, everyone had to enter through the front door, because that's where the farebox was now located.

MSM's streetcars 1300 and 265 were both rebuilt for 1-man operation, so why do they look so different from one another? The answer was the difference in operating philosophy between the two companies. TCRT wanted the





Top: The rebuilt 1-man cars lost their front bulkheads but most retained the front platform stove and hot water heat.

Above: Most of the rebuilds received new leather upholstered seats. We don't know if 265 got them.

flexibility to use a conductor when the loads were extremely heavy. They rebuilt the cars with double-stream doors both front and rear, so both ends could be entrances. They even called them 1-man/2-man cars. DSR had no

intention of placing conductors on the rebuilt cars, so they installed double-stream entrance doors and a single stream exit door in the rear. With the exit door requiring less room, they were able to install a curved seat on the rear platform, increasing the seating capacity by about five.

The differences between the two companies' rebuilds were numerous. Unlike TCRT, DSR installed treadle controls in the rear stepwell. It was a safety feature. The rear exit door could not open unless a passenger was standing on the rear steps and the car was stopped. The treadle and the controller were interlocked. TCRT relied on the motorman to use mirrors to visually monitor the rear door.

Car 1300 and its peers were the first group to be converted to 1-man.

Thereafter, TCRT started with the newest L-8s and worked backward. DSR did just the opposite, converting its oldest cars first and never doing all its L-8s.

All the rebuilds in both systems received new control equipment, motors and trucks. TCRT installed roller bearings. DSR, by then in poor financial condition, chose not to, probably due to the expense.

What DSR did do was equip most of the rebuilds with new leather seats, while TCRT retained the old rattan seats. TCRT, however, replaced the cars' hot water heating systems with forced air, and moved the coal-fired heaters from the front platform to the underside of the car, where they could be more easily stoked and maintained. In most of the cars, DSR kept the hot



265 as a cabin in Solon Springs, Wisconsin.



Car 265 was rebuilt in an unheated building in the former Northern Pacific Como Shops.
Below: The car arrives at CHSL in 1981.

water heat and the heater on the front platform. Once again, poverty was probably the reason.

It's unclear why DSR's rebuilds have a front end that is not symmetrical, while TCRT's are visually balanced. Anyone who cares about esthetics would prefer the looks of 1300 over 265.

Car 265 remained in service until abandonment in 1939. The carbody was sold and reused as a cabin in Solon Springs, Wisconsin. There it sat until the museum acquired it in 1973 and moved it into an unheated wood building at the Burlington Northern's Como Shops complex.

It's never easy reanimating a stripped carbody. The biggest problem is always the trucks, which are in desperately short supply. The museum owned TCRT steeple cab locomotive #20, which had spent its career moving coal cars around the Main Steam Station, TCRT's power plant at the east end of the Stone Arch Bridge. They scrapped the locomotive, keeping the trucks and controls.

The problem with the trucks is that they looked all wrong, unlike any used under a TCRT/DSR streetcar. The solution was what model railroaders would call kit bashing. They removed the motors and installed them in a pair of unpowered trucks from a retired Chicago L car, which looked much more like a TCRT #6 truck. There was only one motor per truck instead of the original two, but for low speed museum running it was enough. The L car was heavier than 265, so several leaf springs had to be removed to soften the ride.

Car 265 returned to service in 1981 and has run continuously since then, with one interruption. The kit bashed trucks were placed under car 1239 and 265 received a pair of ex-Osaka, Japan trucks that give it much better acceleration and speed. They also don't look like TCRT #6 trucks, but you can't have everything.

Here's a sobering fact. Car 265 ran in regular service from 1915 to 1939, 24 years. Its museum career has now spanned 34 years. Happy 100th birthday, 265.

The 6th Avenue N. Line

It was one of the shorter lines in Minneapolis and one of the first to be abandoned. 6th Avenue N. is now known as Olson Memorial Highway and looks completely different than it did in streetcar days.

It started as a horsecar line. In 1885 it branched off the existing Washington Avenue N. tracks and followed 6th Avenue as far west as Girard Avenue. It was extended to Penn Avenue in 1888. It was electrified in 1891 and extended a final two blocks to Russell Avenue in 1893. That's as far as it ever went.

Until 1918 it was paired with 4th Avenue S. That year it was through-routed with the Interurban (St. Paul-Minneapolis via University Avenue). The route into downtown changed. The track on 6th Avenue from Washington Avenue to 5th Street was abandoned. Instead, it followed the Interurban through downtown on 5th Street, where the Green Line runs today. Not every car from St. Paul was through routed. Many, perhaps more than half, terminated at the wye at 5th Street and 5th Avenue N. That wye, by the way, was the source of a couple of the iron overhead wire poles in use today on the Como-Harriet Line.





In 1936, the camera is looking west on 6th Avenue N. at N. 7th Street. That's the Chicago-Penn-Fremont line crossing in the foreground.

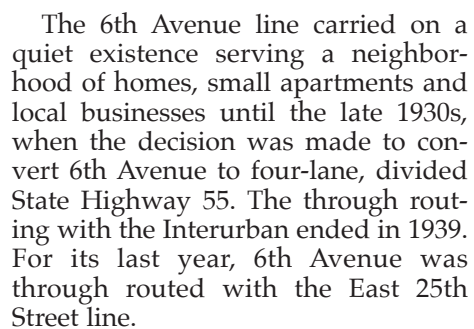


Upper left: Curving from N. 5th Street onto 6th Avenue N. is a remnant of the 6th Avenue line.

Lower left and below: Barney's Lunch held down the northwest corner of 6th Avenue at Lyndale Avenue. Note the To St. Paul destination sign. The bottom photo looks west at the same location. Despite its early abandonment, we have good photo coverage of the line because the city documented 6th Avenue in preparation to its replacement by Olson Memorial Highway.

Opposite page: Businesses line 6th Avenue at Girard Avenue.

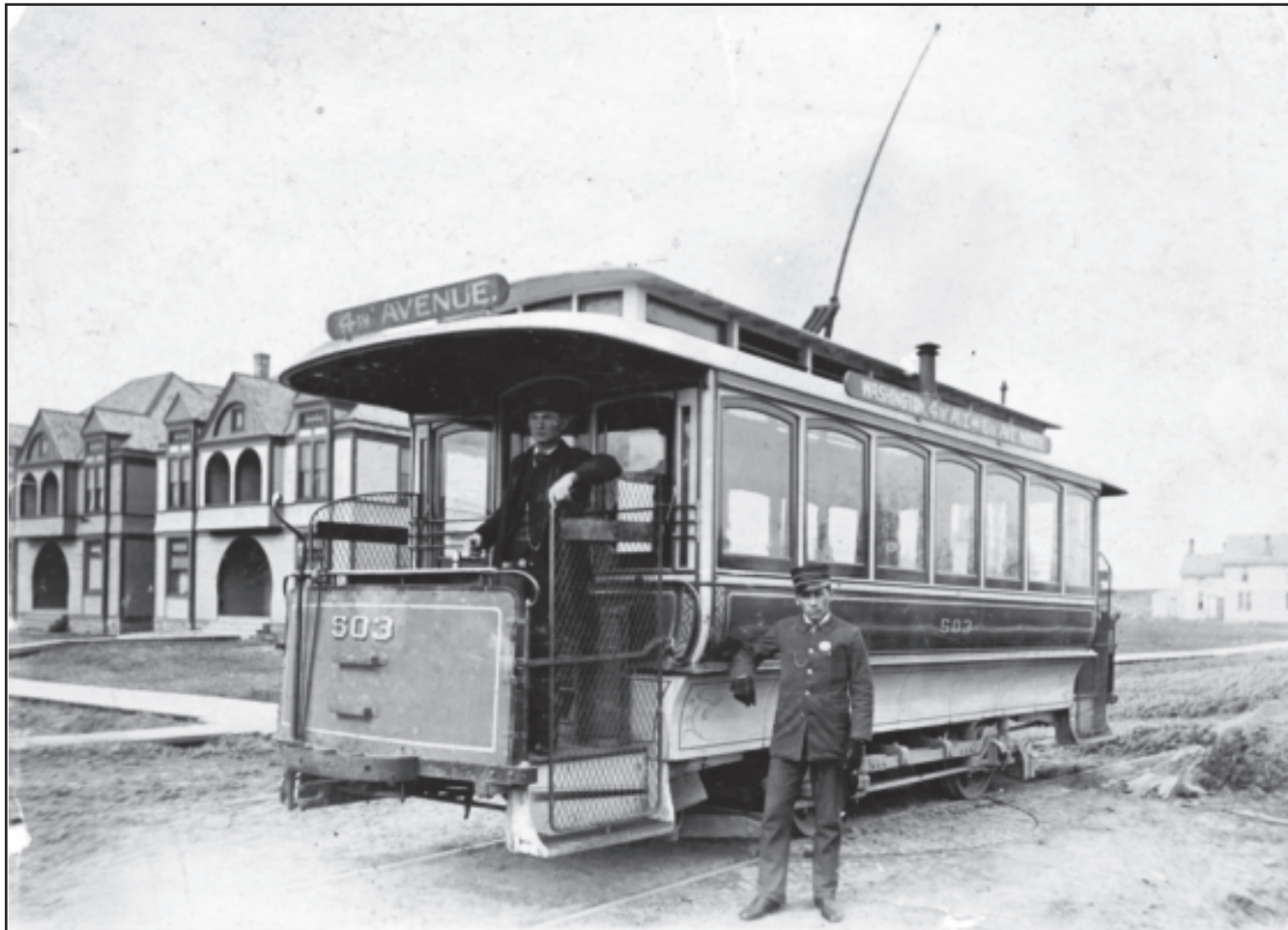




The 6th Avenue line carried on a quiet existence serving a neighborhood of homes, small apartments and local businesses until the late 1930s, when the decision was made to convert 6th Avenue to four-lane, divided State Highway 55. The through routing with the Interurban ended in 1939. For its last year, 6th Avenue was through routed with the East 25th Street line.

The line was abandoned on May 25, 1940.





Top left: 6th Avenue looking west at Newton Avenue.

Above: This is the end of the line and wye at Russell Avenue.

Left: From 1891 to 1893, when this photo was taken, the line ended at Penn Avenue. The line was through-routed with 4th Avenue in south Minneapolis. Note the big goose-necked hand brake, which is how cars were stopped in those days.

7 Corners

Minneapolis and St. Paul both had an intersection on the far edge of downtown called 7 Corners. In Minneapolis, it was where Cedar Avenue, Washington Avenue and 15th Avenue S. crossed one another. In St. Paul it was the confluence of Kellogg Blvd., 4th Street, 7th Street, Main Street and Eagle Street.

Minneapolis

7 Corners was first reached in 1880 by a horsecar line from downtown via Washington Avenue, that continued east on Riverside Avenue. The line was electrified in 1890 as part of creating the Interurban between the two downtowns via University Avenue. That same year the Riverside Avenue line was also electrified, and the line on Cedar Avenue south from 7 Corners was electrified in 1891.

Ultimately four lines left downtown on Washington Avenue. At 7 Corners the Interurban split off to the east to cross the Mississippi River into the University of Minnesota. The other three travelled south on Cedar Avenue. The Minnehaha-Fort Snelling line turned east onto Riverside Avenue, a couple of blocks south of 7 Corners. The East 25th Street and Cedar-28th Avenue lines continued on Cedar and split at Minnehaha Avenue, just north of Franklin Avenue.

The Minneapolis 7 Corners was a major transfer point between the Interurban and the other three lines. It rated a starter, who assisted passengers and supervised the streetcars.



In 1952 an Interurban headed to the U of M and St. Paul loads passengers at 7 Corners. The Minnehaha, East 25th Street and Cedar Avenue lines used the tracks at right. Minneapolis Star-Tribune photo, Minnesota Historical Society collection.



Above left: An aerial view of 7 Corners about 1929.

Left: Although the original facade is gone, the Southern Theater still stands on Washington Avenue just north of 7 Corners.

Opposite: Looking south at cars on the East 25th Street and Minnehaha-Fort Snelling lines turning from Washington onto Cedar.

All Minnesota Historical Society collection.



St. Paul

St. Paul's 7 Corners was even busier and more complex in its layout.

The Twin Cities' very first horsecar line on 4th Street passed through 7 Corners in 1872.

In 1886 the Selby Avenue cable line was opened on 4th Street in downtown, through 7 Corners and out Selby Avenue.

Eventually five lines funneled up 7th Street from the west--Fort Snelling, Randolph, St. Clair, Grand Avenue and Dale Street. All continued into downtown on 7th Street except the Grand, which angled onto 4th Street. Starting in 1948, the Dale Street line also used 4th Street. Meanwhile, the Selby-Lake line descended Kellogg Blvd. from the Selby Tunnel, passed through 7 Corners and traversed downtown on 4th Street.

Complicating the track arrangement was a clockwise turning loop off of 7th Street that used Kellogg, Main and 5th Street. For a very short distance it was a third track in Kellogg. The loop widened to two tracks in the block of Main between Kellogg and 5th Street, to accommodate multiple cars laying over. This was called the 7 Corners Terminal. It was the end of the line for the Stillwater cars, and also served as a staging location for trippers on other lines headed to the east side of St. Paul.

We don't know when the loop was constructed. The 1895 photo with the cable car tracks doesn't show it. Russ Olson has found a reference to it in 1905. It was definitely used as late as 1950, because a car appears on it in the photo on page 17.

To show that the loop's function as a staging area is still needed, Metro Transit has built a bus terminal a block away that serves the same purpose as the loop.



Above: Looking east along 4th Street at the traffic free for all that was 7 Corners in the 1920s. In the foreground is a Selby-Lake car headed from Kellogg Blvd. onto 4th. At right is a Grand Avenue car turning from 4th onto W. 7th Street. The turning loop to Main Street is visible at left. Minnesota Historical Society collection.



Below: This 1895 photo shows the Selby cable car tracks still in place. They would be electrified in 1898. Minnesota Historical Society collection.



Above: These spliced photos show the Main Street loop in the foreground and a car emerging at left from 7th Street. Minnesota Historical Society collection.
Below: An eastbound Selby-Lake car enters 7 Corners. Art Rusterholz photo.



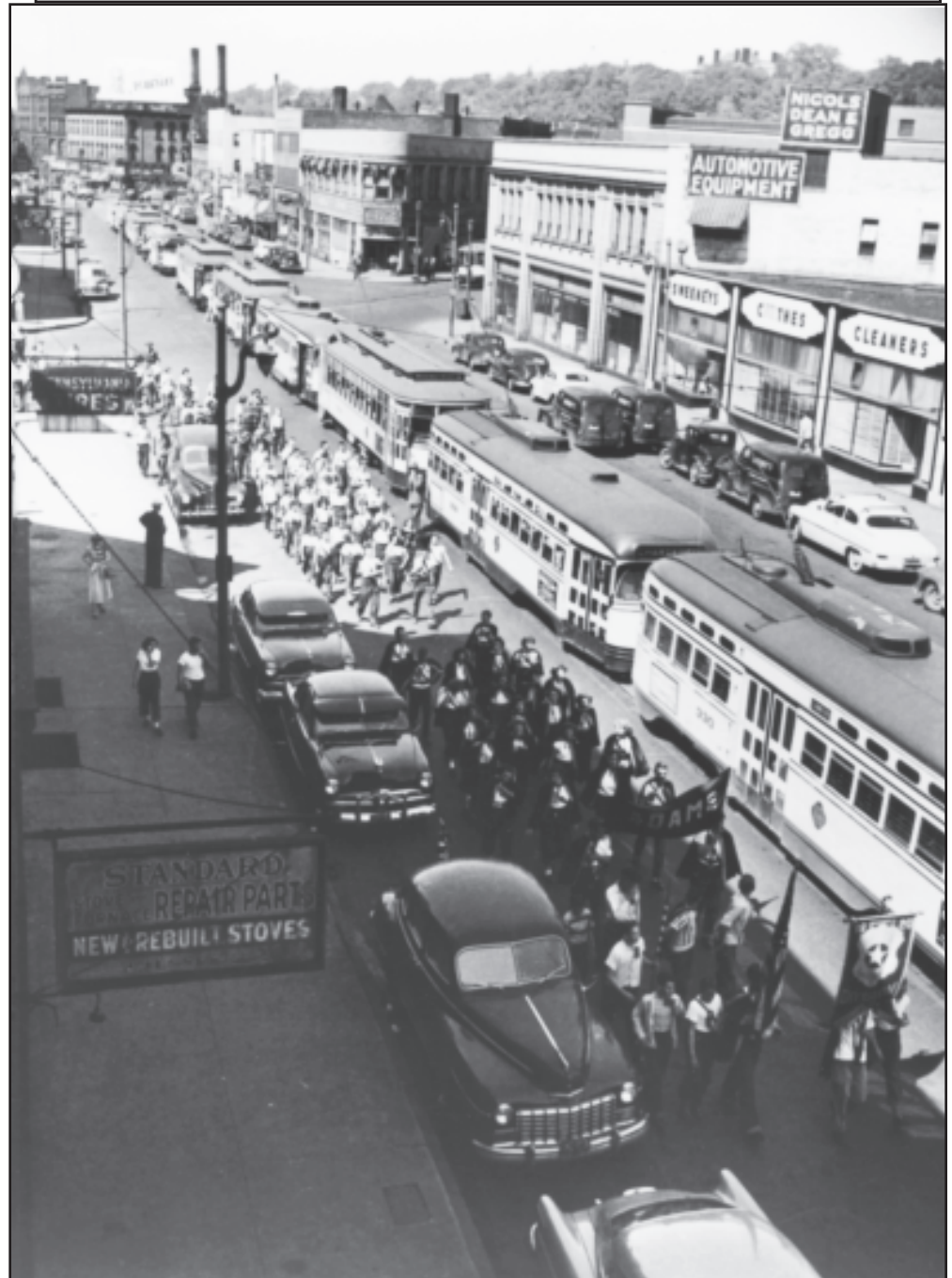




Opposite: Looking west on W. 7th Street. Minnesota Historical Society collection.
Below: An eastbound Grand-Mississippi PCC car turns from 7th Street onto 4th Street. George Krambles photo.



Left: A derailment in the middle of 7 Corners. Pioneer Press photo.
Below: A parade has tied up traffic. This is the corner of 5th Street and 7th Street, a block east of 7 Corners. Note the streetcar emerging from the Main Street loop. Pioneer Press photo, Minnesota Historical Society collection.



**TCRT
informational
ads from
the 1920s**

The public tended to take streetcar service for granted, so TCRT responded with multiple Helping Hand ads describing the company's activities behind the scenes, and others promoting the streetcar's crucial role in the development and life of the city.

Apologies for the not-so-good reproduction of these ads. They were in the MSM files, predate modern scanning technology, and the originals are no longer available.

*Upper Journal
Press, Des Moines 7/27/24*

THE HELPING HAND



This is the scene of some of our craftsmen during the operation of the Twin City Lines.

BUILDERS

THREE is a definite reason for the high standard of perfection that has been reached in the building of Twin City street cars.

The newest cars are the product of nearly two decades of car building by men who have embodied into car construction the essence of building craftsmanship.

The new car, with noise and friction eliminated to the almost irreducible minimum, was planned and built by Twin City men who carried on unflinchingly to make an ideal become a workable reality. It is the Northwest's contribution to the rapid transit industry.

At the company's big shops at Snelling Avenue is housed the mechanical department—The Builders—with its machine, steel, mill, paint and erecting shops—the forge and foundry, and testing laboratories.

Here, friction was reduced when the journal box was discarded for the roller bearing, and car weight reduced almost fifty percent to keep pace with the electric motor development. The old cast iron brake was superseded by the modern band brake, and electric resistance was harnessed to heat the cars.

The Helping Hand of the mechanical department plays a major part in the street railway's efforts to operate efficiently in the community which it serves.



TWIN CITY LINES

THE TRADE MARK OF A FRIEND

*Upper Journal
Press, Des Moines 7/27/24*

THE HELPING HAND

TRACK AND ROADWAY

FOUR hundred and ninety miles of steel track are woven into the network of the street railway transportation that binds together the Twin Cities and suburban territories.

This steel track over which transportation flows reaches from the humblest homes on the outskirts to the business centers, and is the parallel of the water system because it must be as conscientiously maintained if the city's life is to function unceasingly.

The building and maintenance of the track and roadway, on which cars operate continuously in the daily service of nearly a million people, is the task of the Helping Hand of the department of Maintenance of Way.

Standard track on the city streets is laid on a ballast of broken stone. White oak ties hold the heavy steel rails in position by means of tie plates and screw spikes.



This is the fourth of several of our craftsmen during the operation of the Twin City Lines.

The rails are welded to form continuous bars over which the cars roll smoothly. The space between the ties is concreted to form the foundation for the pavement.

The pavement of smooth granite blocks—never used by the street cars, but paid for by the car rider—the most durable and costly substance known for paving purposes, is laid on the concrete foundation. The joints of the pavement are filled with liquid cement grout which hardens and binds the blocks into a smooth solid floor.



TWIN CITY LINES

THE TRADE MARK OF A FRIEND

THE HELPING HAND



OPERATION

READINESS to serve is becoming more and more the watchword of Industry.

It has become the countersign of the army of workers who make up the personnel of the street railway company.

Good service is the basis of public good will, and service is dependent upon the men who actually operate the cars and the organization behind them.

One of the big departments that makes up the Twin City Lines' organization is the operating department. It is the department charged with the successful operation and maintenance of service.

More than 2,500 persons are directly concerned with operation alone, and they include the general superintendent, division superintendents, superintendents of schedules and employment; supervisors, station foremen, inspectors, trainmen, checkers, switchmen, clerks and other office forces.

It is the Helping Hand of all, combined with public co-operation, that makes Twin City Lines' service stand out pre-eminently within the street railway industry.

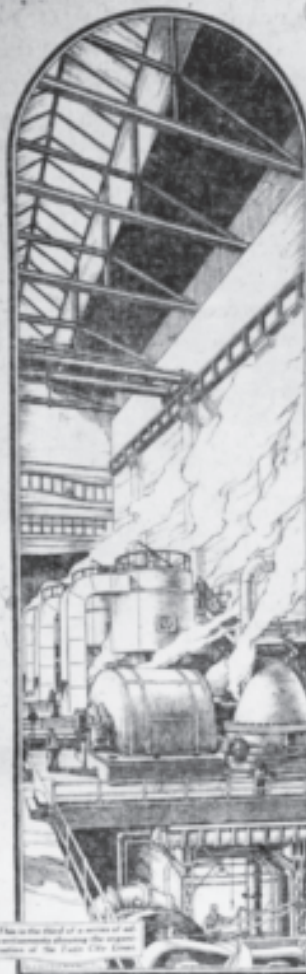


TWIN
CITY
LINES

THE TRADE MARK

OF A FRIEND

THE HELPING HAND POWER



INVISIBLE and rarely considered is the great, silent power which unceasingly drives nearly one thousand street cars over busy streets in the service of this fast growing community.

Six steam and fourteen turbo-electric generators capable of producing 122,000 horse power are housed in the Twin City Lines' power plants on the Mississippi River at St. Anthony Falls.

One hundred and sixty-five thousand tons of coal are burned each year at the steam plant. Leading from the plant and fourteen sub-stations are 200 miles of underground cables. There are 300 miles of overhead electric feeders, and 475 miles of overhead trolley wire. The entire flow of the Mississippi River is used by the water power plants.

Control of this giant force is exceptional in its completeness. The power system automatically responds to demands for service. When passengers board a car the response extends back even to the coal pile and the river pond where automatic governors feed coal into the stokers, air into the furnace, water into the boilers, steam into the turbines and control gates of the water wheels.

The Helping Hand of two hundred and twenty-five persons maintain and supervise the power system. Power operation and maintenance cost was more than \$1,500,000 in 1923.



TWIN
CITY
LINES

THE TRADE MARK

OF A FRIEND

THE HELPING HAND



This is the first of a series of sub-
compartments showing the various
departments of the Twin City Lines.

Accounting and Stores

IN the background of every great industry, soundly financed and properly operated, is a department of Accounting and Stores. It is rarely considered or little understood by the public, yet, in a measure, it is the guard at the door of the company's expenditures.

This department of the Twin City Lines, under the supervision of a Comptroller, not only "keeps the books" in the old sense, but records accurately and completely the current history of the business, so that the management may draw sound conclusions as to future policy.

The Helping Hand of 100 men and women is required to sustain the high standard of the department, which is so important a requisite to the financing of this street railway.

Street Railway accounting is standardized. The accounts of the Twin City Lines are kept according to the "Uniform System of Accounts for Electric Railways" prescribed by the United States Interstate Commerce Commission.

In 1923 the accounting department of the company accurately subdivided the \$13,500,000 expenditures, equal to the gross revenue, so that all departments easily analyzed daily, monthly and yearly costs.

The Stores Department maintains approximately \$1,000,000 worth of materials and supplies, composed of 25,000 different articles necessary to the efficient operation of the property.



**TWIN
CITY
LINES**

THE TRADE MARK OF A FRIEND

There is no substitute



ALL residents of the City owe to themselves and to the future of the City every help to maintain an efficient and economical street railway system.

Buses are merely advisable as a co-ordinated service to the street car system, which must handle over a million passengers in a day in the Twin Cities.

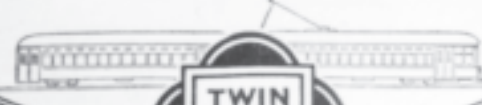
Any unnecessary burden placed on the street car system is important to the citizens that seldom ride the cars as well as to the constant car rider.

It is not a service for the few, but for everyone within the City. It is not a private business, but is regulated in every detail of its operation by your State or your City representatives.

Use the STREET CARS and tell us how to make them more attractive to you.

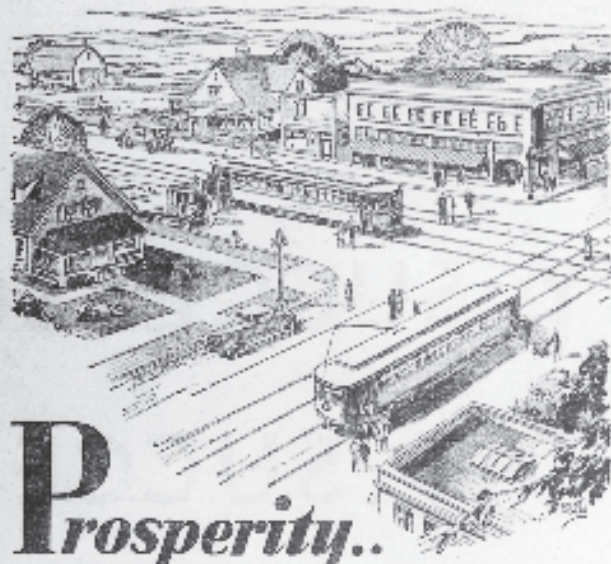
This is the Annual Cost—1928

LABOR	\$ 6,608,596.00
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	4,845,230.00
TAXES	1,096,249.00
INTEREST	1,221,445.00
TOTAL	\$ 13,771,520.00



**TWIN
CITY
LINES**

THE TRADE MARK OF A FRIEND



Prosperity.. and the Car Lines

PROSPERITY follows car line extensions if routes are chosen wisely and with the vision that comes of experience.

Providing of circuitous routes or the hampering of established lines to reach new sections brings prosperity to neither the community or company.

Necessary additions and extensions should be made soundly and cheaply to keep down capital outlays and operating expenses, thereby keep-

ing the rate of fare at minimum.

Extensions over proper routes make busy streets out of open fields.

New businesses spring into life, to serve the varied needs of the community.

Civic growth and progress are possible only through the sound expansion of the existing transportation system.

Use the street cars and tell us how to make them more attractive to you.

This is the Annual Cost—1903

CAPITAL	\$1,000,000.00
INTEREST ON CAPITAL	\$100,000.00
DEPRECIATION	\$100,000.00
OPERATING EXPENSES	\$100,000.00
TOTAL	\$1,300,000.00



TWIN
CITY
LINES

THE TRADE MARK

OF A FRIEND

Tom Lowry unloads on the Pioneer Press

In June 1892 the Pioneer Press published an article that accused Tom Lowry and Twin City Rapid Transit of neglecting the development of the St. Paul streetcar system in favor of Minneapolis, along with a variety of other complaints.

On the one hand, anyone running a streetcar system in the 1890s (or any time for that matter) was guaranteed plenty of criticism by the public.

Lowry, however, had just gone through an incredibly stressful period. He had raised the money to completely convert both horsecar systems to electricity, which included relaying all the track in both cities. On top of that he had merged the two systems into TCRT and was rapidly expanding lines. To do all this he was financially leveraged to the hilt.

Therefore, it is understandable that he completely lost it and the result was this remarkable counterpunch at the ungrateful media. Here's the verbatim text.

TOM'S TERSE TALK.

The Street Car Magnate Writes a Letter to Joe Wheelock In Which He Takes the Sleek St Paul Editor Into Camp.

Policy of the Railway Company in St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Some Caustic Comment Sandwiched Between the Facts.

Minneapolis, Minn., July 12, 1892.

Joseph A. Wheelock, Esq., Editor Pioneer Press:

Will you kindly grant me the use of your columns to address a few lines to you personally, and through you, to

citizens of St. Paul. For months past you appear to have tried to create a sentiment against the city railway company by publishing every rumor against the company, no matter how absurd or untruthful.

In your issue of Sunday, July 10 under the head of Local Transit, you put me in such a false position that I deem a reply necessary. The present rights of the company I will not discuss with your paper, but will in future as in the past, endeavor to protect them when assailed. In Sunday's issue you say:

"Not content with building a Minneapolis chute for St. Paul pleasure seekers and forcing them to enter it or stay at home, he has attempted to divert trade and business to Minneapolis, as the wretched street car service given to St. Anthony Park and Hamline citizens to reach St. Paul amply demonstrates."

When did I build a "chute for St. Paul pleasure seekers, etc." and how have I attempted to divert trade and business to Minneapolis? I suppose you mean by the "chute" the line of street cars in Minneapolis extending to Lake Harriet. This line was built many years ago by Col. McCrory, afterwards sold to James J. Hill of St. Paul, and by him sold to the street railway company. It was in operation as a steam road at the time the electric ordinance was passed in St. Paul, in 1889. In our contract with the city of Minneapolis to build electric lines, we agreed to convert existing lines of street railway into electric lines, and to build about forty miles additional road. In our contract with St. Paul, under Ordinance No. 1237, we agreed to convert existing horse car lines into electric lines, and to build about thirty-five miles of additional road. In Minneapolis, outside the contract, we have not built a foot of road (except switches or turn-outs),

but have had the time for completion extended on twelve miles of road included in the contract. In St. Paul we have built about twenty miles of road not included in the contract, and have completed all the lines except the Stryker and Maria avenue lines, a total of less than one and a half miles, thus making

About Fifteen Miles More

new electric lines built during this time in St. Paul than in Minneapolis. The residents of St. Anthony Park have urged us for two years to extend the Langford avenue (Como Avenue today) line to Minneapolis, a distance of 2.0 miles to connect, but we have declined to build it because the travel would not warrant the expenditure. The same with Fort Snelling. The distance to connect our present line with the fort is less than three miles, but there is no travel to warrant the outlay. Does this look like discrimination?

When the electric ordinance was passed in St. Paul your council and committee listened to the clamor of every real estate owner, and imposed upon the company a burden that you admitted to me would not have been undertaken and carried out by any twenty of your own citizens. The Fort Snelling, Maria avenue, State Street, Hamline, Stryker avenue and Jackson street extensions were forced upon the company against my protests. There was no public demand or need for these extensions at the time, and there has been no travel since to warrant the operation of any of them. When the ordinance passed it was generally supposed that the extension of electric lines would give a renewed impetus to real estate sales, and that many houses would be built along the lines. As a matter of fact, our improvements met with no response; even at the present

time there is nothing to warrant the building of street car lines in these localities.

Within the past few months your paper has announced that St. Paul enjoyed the best street car service in the United States. The service has since been increased, but the travel and "public necessities" have not increased. If we are to run our street car system on strictly "public necessities" it would be far better for us to let the matter be brought to the courts to determine what are "public necessities". I am sure it would reduce the service in both St. Paul and Minneapolis. You say:

"Mr. Lowry seems to have seen afar off that Como park would unite a resort far beyond anything of its character possessed by Minneapolis and that, when once easily accessible, it would attract thousands of St. Paul people now forced into going to Minneapolis for an outing if they would have a particle of comfort in transit. So, in the franchise granted, in 1884 he caused to be inserted express provisions that the line to Como park need not be extended until the streets in that section are sewered, or until the lake is up to the same level as in 1885. The streets in that section are not sewered—there will be no necessity for sewers for years. Neither is the lake up to the height attained in 1885, an absurd provision laughed at by outsiders, doubtless chuckled over by Mr. Lowry."

This statement is unfair and unjust, aside from its untruthfulness. I have given more attention to Como and its beauties than most residents of St. Paul. Many years before I was interested in the street railway company, I joined a few residents of St. Paul to build a line to Como. After spending about \$40,000 on the line it was

merged with the St. Paul City Railway company, when your citizens owned four-fifths of the stock, and they decided it was not a feasible line to build.

Long before the electric ordinance was passed I was importuned to build a line to Como, not because it was necessary to reach the park, but parties interested in real estate urged it on the ground that the locality would soon develop if it had street car service. You recently said in your paper that not one of St. Paul's citizens in a hundred knew of the beauties of Como park.

You made the statement, coupled with the assertion that it was because it was not accessible by street cars. Why at the same time were you not fair enough to say that this same park, 320 or more acres, was purchased by the city of St. Paul by issuing twenty-five-year bonds, which bonds have long since matured, and that until Minneapolis began a system of parks, your city

Never Thought Of It

as worth improving? When the electric ordinance No. 1227 was under consideration, your committee of thirty from a chamber of commerce and your city council insisted on all the extensions requested by real estate agents and owners, the line from Rice street on Como to Front street included, but had very little to say about the extension to the park. When it was spoken of I insisted that the city should properly improve it before the company was compelled to run street cars to a wilderness. It was then asserted that arrangements had been made to make it a beautiful park, and it was your own committee and council that inserted the requirements as to raising the water to its height in 1885. I did not know how high it was in 1885, or how low it was in 1889, but I had faith to

agree to the extension conditioned on any proposition that would make the park a favorable resort.

You now say that I waived the clause requiring sewers to be built, or the waters of Como raised to 1885 etc., and add: "That he did so verbally to citizens at different times, there is abundant proof." This is false. At the last moment, when your committee had overwhelmed me with conditions, and an ordinance was agreed upon, Ald. Pratt sprung the Hamline line and Langford avenue line and insisted on its being built or he would vote against it. I absolutely refused to accept this last straw until your citizens urged me to "let it go," and promised that it should not be required if it was found too burdensome. Among, these was your business manager, Mr. Driscoll. Mr. Ed Rogers, I think, can also furnish some proof on this point, as can also Mr. H. J. Horn. Early in 1891 in company with Mr. Scott, I was driving out Como avenue to see what improvements had been made in the park. Near Como we met Mr. Warren, who proposed to show us where the street railroad should be built. He pointed out the line on Front street and Chatsworth, and showed us where the under-crossing of the Northern Pacific road was to be made, and said it would be completed at once. I listened, and said very little. When a committee of citizens of St. Paul, including Mr. Warren, called on me a few weeks ago (the latter part of May) Mr. Warren spoke of my promises to complete the line and I at once made the statement as above, and which he did not at that time deny. Two or three days later I telephoned D. D. Merrill that Mr. Goodrich and myself would meet a few citizens, and look the ground over with a view of building a line to the park. We called at Mr. Merrill's store

the same morning, and met Mr. Merrill, D. K. Noyes, Mr. Hager and Mr. Warren, who drove us through the park. Before separating I stated to the gentlemen present that within a few days we would make a proposition as to building the line, and requested that in the meantime nothing be said, as it was useless to have the matter discussed or published until we were ready to make a definite proposition. To this all agreed, including Mr. Warren.

Imagine my surprise at seeing more than occurred in the Pioneer Press the next morning, and an article headed "He Wants the Earth," etc. This was based on a proposition made originally by Mr. Warren to run through the park and connect with our Langford avenue line.

The morning it appeared I called on Mr. Merrill and informed him that we did not propose to quarrel with the Pioneer Press or the city of St. Paul, and that we would drop the matter until someone with authority would meet us with a reasonable proposition.

This is the extent of my promises concerning a line to Como park. You say: "The sudden blooming of the Twin City Rapid Transit company, the removal of the superintendent of the St. Paul system." If you will peruse the columns of the Pioneer Press, you will find that the Twin City Rapid Transit company "bloomed" more than a year ago. It was caused by reason of the fact that

The Obligations Imposed

upon the Minneapolis Street Railway company and the St. Paul City Railway company in transforming their systems into electric lines and building so many new lines and extensions in so short a time required the raising of an amount of money greater

than the combined capital and surplus of all the banks in either St. Paul or Minneapolis, and that, to accomplish this, it became necessary to put the ownership of both companies, under one control. In this great enterprise I risked my all to carry out the contracts of these companies and give both cities an efficient street car service.

How well I have kept faith, and more than redeemed all promises and expectations, your own citizens testified by their presence to do me honor on a very cold night in January last. Since then the street car service has been improved in both cities. Of all the cars operated in St. Paul, only five were in service before the change from horse power to electricity was made, while in Minneapolis fifteen cars are in use which were operated with horses. All the other cars operated in the St. Paul lines are from 4 1/2 to 8 feet longer than the cars formerly used. The transfer system is, no doubt, objectionable, as is also the operation of the extensions to which you refer, but they are all according to the ordinance, and as insisted upon, at the time it was passed.

The service is more than adequate to the travel, and there is not a car in operation in St. Paul that is not equal to or better than any street car operated in the city of New York. I am not to blame because Minneapolis has the most perfect park system in the world, and because St. Paul residents come here to enjoy it. I am not at fault because Minneapolis has a library where not only the citizens of St. Paul, but of the whole Northwest, necessarily must come to make scientific, political and other educational researches: nor because of other attractions calculated to bring St. Paul people to our city. I have endeavored to assist in my small way in educating your people to

"go and do likewise." When Field, Mahler & Co., after weeks, if not months of solicitation, failed to induce your citizens to build for them a building suited for the finest dry goods store in the Northwest, I "filled the gap", on the mere request of Mr. Field, who, at that time, was to me a comparative stranger and when your Masonic brethren and Young Men's Christian association needed comfortable quarters, which your people would not furnish. I enlarged my building so as to accommodate them and yet you boldly assert that I am doing everything in my power to injure St. Paul.

'Tis said that "self-praise is half scandal," and I believe it but in view of your malicious and uncalled for attack, I cannot resist saying a word in self-defense. It is all the more inexcusable on your part, because only three days ago I personally told you "that I would do anything necessary to correct mistakes or abuses, if such existed, in the street railway system".

Your Hatred to Minneapolis

leads you to advocate, in the case of the street railway, a course that would put to shame the Homestead strikers. You know better, but their education and experience is limited to their own real or fancied grievances. Ordinarily, I think you intend to be honest, but when Minneapolis is named it curdles the blood in your veins and eliminates every iota of justice or honesty from your nature. Now, my once dear old friend (and I see no reason why you should not be so still), you are not too old to take advice. Exercise a little common sense, if you have any left, on this question. You concede that the only remedy left for the city is to annoy the company. Suppose tracks are ordered on sewered streets where they are not needed, the company will

build them, and the city will be the sufferer. Street railway tracks are not an ornament to a street, and are only laid as a matter of convenience, to the residents of the city. All surplus tracks are a nuisance and detriment. Suppose the present company failed to comply with the conditions of its charter, and a forfeiture was imposed sufficient to put the company, in the hands of a receiver, could that benefit St. Paul? Suppose the franchise was forfeited and the company removed its tracks and equipment. Would St. Paul gain anything by it? You asked me the other day if I would meet a committee of your citizens to confer on the subject, and I said certainly. I concede that the transfer system should be changed, and that a line should be built to Como park on the completion of certain improvements. Perhaps some other changes should be made which are not necessary for me to discuss at this time. Your Como park needs attractions, and our company will aid in furnishing them on a fair and equitable basis.

Instead of the course you outline, would it not be wiser to advocate the appointment of a committee from each branch of your city council, who, with your park board, would meet our company and endeavor to come to an agreement that would be satisfactory and beneficial to both the city of St. Paul and the street railway company? In any event, our company must have a hearing, either in or out of court. While we have our preference, we will accommodate ourselves to the situation.

Yours very truly,
Thomas Lowry.



The ad sign on the Oak-Harriet car says "The safest place on the street is in the street car." In marked contrast, this stylish lady is in a rather unsafe place, despite the Safety Zone sign behind her. The year is 1937 on Hennepin Avenue in downtown. Minneapolis Star-Tribune photo, Minnesota Historical Society collection.



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

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